

REMARKS

Claims 2-3, 8-10, 12, 18, 25, 28, 31-32, 40, 42-46 and 48 have been amended.

Claims 1, 38-39, 41 and 49-51 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 52-55 have been added. New independent claim 52 is based on original claim 1 and on features shown in FIG. 14 and the description thereof. No new matter has been added.

Claims 2-37, 40, 42-48 and 52-55 are pending.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3-7, 10, 11, 13-37, 40 and 42-48 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 3, 10, 42 and 45-46 have been amended to be in independent form, and thus are in *prima facie* condition for allowance. Dependent claims 2, 4-9, 11-37, 43-44 and 47-48 ultimately depend from one of independent claims 3 and 42, and are thus likewise in *prima facie* condition for allowance.

Claim objections

Claims 2, 3 and 12 were objected to for informalities. Claims 2, 3 and 12 have been amended to correct the informalities, and applicants submit that the objections thereto have been overcome.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1, 2, 8 and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,307,315 to Oowaki et al. (“Oowaki”). Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oowaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,394,077 to Atsumi (“Atsumi”). Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oowaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,276,843 to Tillinghast et al. (“Tillinghast”). These rejections are moot in light of the cancellation of claims 1 and 41, and the amendments to claims 2, 8, 9 and 12 to depend from claim 3, which has been amended to be in *prima facie* condition for allowance based on the indication of allowable subject matter therein.

New claims

New claims 52-55 have been added. New independent claim 52 is based on original claim 1 and on features shown in FIG. 14 and the description thereof. New claim 52, and claims 53-55 which ultimately depend from claim 52, are believed to be allowable.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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